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Cooperation between the United Nations and regional and other organizations: cooperation between the United Nations and the Asian-African Legal Consultative Organization; cooperation between the United Nations and the Latin American Economic System

Cooperation between the United Nations and regional and other organizations

Report of the Secretary-General*

Addendum

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* This addendum was late owing to a delay in receiving submissions.



Part Two

Cooperation between the United Nations and organizations in the economic field

XVI. Cooperation between the United Nations and the Latin American Economic System

Summary

Since the establishment of the Latin American Economic System (SELA) in October 1975, considerable cooperation has taken place between the organizations and bodies of the United Nations system and SELA. The level, intensity and number of entities participating in this cooperation have evolved over the years. During the reporting period there has been a reduction in the number of United Nations organizations undertaking cooperation activities with SELA and in the scope of such activities. This could be explained by the financial constraints faced by SELA in the last few years and the subsequent suspension of some of its activities. Four organizations reported cooperation at different levels with SELA, including information exchanges, reciprocal attendance at meetings, financial contributions for activities carried out by SELA and joint execution of activities.

I. Introduction

1. The present report was prepared in compliance with General Assembly resolution 59/258 on cooperation between the United Nations and the Latin American Economic System (SELA).

2. For the preparation of the present report, the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) consulted with those organizations of the United Nations system which had reported the highest levels of collaboration with SELA and requested an update on their cooperation activities. The organizations were: the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, the International Labour Organization, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), the World Health Organization/Pan American Health Organization (WHO/PAHO), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development and the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF).

3. As noted in the report of the Secretary-General to the General Assembly at its fifty-ninth session (A/59/303), since the establishment of SELA in October 1975, considerable cooperation has taken place between the organizations and bodies of the United Nations system and SELA.

4. The level, intensity and number of entities participating in this cooperation have evolved over the years, from periods with significant levels of cooperation activity being undertaken by a relatively high number of organizations and bodies of the United Nations system and SELA, to periods in which the collaboration has consisted mainly of information exchanges, the participation of representatives in selected activities and the joint execution of a few initiatives.

5. During the reporting period, there has been a reduction in the number of United Nations organizations undertaking cooperation activities with SELA. This trend could be explained by the financial constraints that SELA has been experiencing in the past few years, which have resulted in the suspension of some activities that it had traditionally implemented, thereby reducing the possibilities for it to engage in more comprehensive cooperation initiatives with United Nations counterparts. It is hoped that the trend can be reversed, providing that the prevailing financial and institutional difficulties of SELA are overcome. The Millennium Development Goals, South-South cooperation and natural disasters have emerged as the most relevant areas of cooperation between the organizations and bodies of the United Nations system and SELA.

6. Cooperation between ECLAC and SELA during the period under review has consisted mainly of information exchanges and the participation of ECLAC and SELA representatives in meetings convened by the two institutions.

7. The Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean participated in the regional meeting on economic relations between the European Union and Latin America and the Caribbean, organized by SELA (Caracas, 13 and 14 March 2005).

8. The Commission will make a presentation, on the theme "The application of methodologies, indicators and indices in risk management and natural disaster prevention in Latin America and the Caribbean: socio-economic costs of disasters and their impact on development", at the eighteenth Meeting of Directors of

International Technical Cooperation of Latin America and the Caribbean (Antigua, Guatemala, 16 October 2006).

9. Through the International Institute for Higher Education in Latin America and the Caribbean, UNESCO collaborated with SELA in organizing an experts seminar on integration and the role of higher education (Caracas, 18 and 19 July 2005).

10. The World Health Organization/Pan American Health Organization has continued and intensified its collaboration with SELA in the past few years. It attended the thirtieth and thirty-first ordinary meetings of the SELA Latin American Council (Caracas, 22-24 November 2004 and 21-23 November 2005, respectively).

11. The World Health Organization/Pan American Health Organization has also participated in various activities aimed at strengthening horizontal technical cooperation among countries in the Americas, including the seventeenth Meeting of Directors of International Technical Cooperation (Caracas, 2-4 May 2005). At that meeting, a presentation was made on harmonization and coordination in international cooperation in the health sector and the challenges in achieving the Millennium Development Goals, using lessons learned in three WHO/PAHO priority countries (i.e., Guyana, Haiti and Nicaragua).

12. Within the framework of a recently formalized subregional technical cooperation framework adopted at its 45th Directing Council (Washington, D.C., 27 September-1 October 2004), WHO/PAHO is currently considering expanding its collaboration with SELA in activities aimed at strengthening border-area health initiatives. This would be carried out through the working group on health of the Common Market of the South and the Health Agency of the Hipólito Unzué Agreement of the Andean Community.

13. The World Health Organization/Pan American Health Organization has also cooperated with SELA in activities related to emergencies and disaster preparedness and their economic impact on health. In addition, the organization plans to jointly undertake technical cooperation activities with SELA and with the ministries of health in the region, with a view to further strengthening collaboration between external relations and planning and health sectors at the country level.

14. The Special Unit for South-South Cooperation of UNDP has continued to contribute to the annual meetings held by SELA of directors of international technical cooperation. Such support has facilitated the participation of States members of SELA in the discussion of major policy issues and priorities in the area of technical cooperation among developing countries. The main themes analysed and discussed in recent years relate to the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals, financing for development and deepening cooperation between the public and private sectors. Emphasis has also been placed on social responsibility and the role of the private sector in fostering development.

15. During those meetings, both institutions agreed to continue to support efforts to achieve the Millennium Development Goals and to explore opportunities for furthering cooperation in financing for development. The dissemination of best practices in various areas of development and promoting advocacy for the achievement of the Goals through South-South and triangular cooperation will continue to characterize the partnership between the two entities.

16. The UNICEF Regional Office for Latin America and the Caribbean has continued to hold informal consultations with SELA on a wide scope of issues, including on the many different financial, economic, social and political factors that hinder efforts to ensure respect for children's rights in the region.

Part Five

Cooperation between the United Nations and the Asian-African Legal Consultative Organization

I. Introduction

1. The present report is submitted pursuant to paragraph 7 of General Assembly resolution 59/3. It reports on the various activities of the Asian-African Legal Consultative Organization (AALCO) during the biennium June 2004-May 2006. In the same resolution, the Assembly decided to include the item on cooperation between the United Nations and AALCO in the provisional agenda of its sixty-first session.

II. Overview of cooperation between the United Nations and the Asian-African Legal Consultative Organization during the period under review*

A. Cooperative framework

2. In accordance with the cooperative framework between the United Nations and AALCO, consultations have been conducted routinely on matters of common interest, including, in particular, representation at each other's meetings and the exchange of information and documentation. During the period under review, consultations were held between the Under-Secretary-General for Legal Affairs and Legal Counsel of the United Nations and the Secretary-General of AALCO.

3. The Asian-African Legal Consultative Organization continues to orient its work programme in order to accord priority to matters concerning the United Nations and to initiate action with a view to strengthening the role of the United Nations. Cooperation in the area of international law includes matters relating to law of the sea, international trade law, international environmental law, human rights law, refugee law, humanitarian law and peaceful settlement of disputes.

B. Representation at international conferences and meetings

4. During the period under review, AALCO was represented at the fifty-ninth (2004) and sixtieth (2005) sessions of the General Assembly. It was also represented at the fifty-seventh (2005) and fifty-eighth (2006) sessions of the International Law Commission; the first Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Convention Against Transnational Organized Crimes (2004); the Regional Expert Meeting on the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict¹ (December 2004); the tenth Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (December 2004); the eleventh United Nations

* The present report is based upon information received from the Secretary-General of AALCO.

¹ The meeting was held in Phnom Penh from 6 to 8 December 2004. It was jointly organized by the International Committee of the Red Cross and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization.

Congress on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice (April 2005); the International Conference on Environment, Peace and Dialogue Among Civilizations and Culture² (May 2005); and the regional conference on the theme "The World Trade Organization at 10: the role of developing countries in negotiations and dispute settlement" (February 2006).³

5. Representatives of various United Nations bodies participated in the forty-third,⁴ forty-fourth⁵ and forty-fifth⁶ sessions of AALCO, held in Bali (Indonesia), Nairobi and New Delhi. These included representatives of the International Law Commission, the United Nations University, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO), the Secretariat of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, the International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime and the World Health Organization (WHO). Representatives of the International Criminal Court, the International Institute for the Unification of Private Law, the Commonwealth Secretariat, East African Community and the League of Arab States were also present.

6. As it has become customary, topics on the current work programme of the International Law Commission are discussed during the annual sessions of AALCO. Discussions on the work of the Commission at its fifty-sixth and fifty-seventh sessions, were held during the respective forty-fourth and forty-fifth sessions of AALCO. The Chairman of the Commission attended the AALCO sessions and submitted a report on the work of the Commission. The report on the AALCO deliberations was presented by the Secretary-General of AALCO to the Commission in July 2005, during its fifty-seventh session, and in July 2006, during its fifty-eighth session.

C. Measures designed to further the work of the Sixth Committee of the General Assembly

7. In fulfilment of its function to render assistance to its member States and with a view to facilitating their active participation in the work of the General Assembly, AALCO prepares, on a regular basis, notes and comments on selected items on the agenda of the General Assembly, in particular items under consideration by the Sixth Committee.

8. For the fifty-ninth session of the General Assembly, the AALCO secretariat prepared notes and comments⁷ on the following: report on matters relating to the

² The Conference was held in Tehran on 9 and 10 May 2005. It was jointly organized by the Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran and the United Nations Environment Programme.

³ The regional conference was organized by the AALCO Regional Arbitration Centre for International Commercial Arbitration and the League of Arab States. It was funded by the World Trade Organization.

⁴ For details see AALCO, *Yearbook of the Asian-African Legal Consultative Organization*, vol. II (2004). The session was held from 21 to 25 June 2004 in Bali, Indonesia.

⁵ *Ibid.*, vol. III (2005). The session was held from 27 June to 1 July 2005 in Nairobi.

⁶ For details, see AALCO, *Report of the Forty-Fifth Session*. The session was held from 3 to 8 April 2006 at AALCO headquarters in New Delhi.

⁷ See AALCO/NotesandComments/UNGA/59/2004.

work of the International Law Commission at its fifty-sixth session; report on the work of the United Nations Commission on International Trade Law at its thirty-seventh session; jurisdictional immunities of states and their property; oceans and the law of the sea; the International Criminal Court; recent developments; measures to eliminate international terrorism; international cooperation in the fight against transnational organized crime; effective international legal instrument against corruption; the World Summit on Sustainable Development; follow up; and deportation of Palestinians and other Israeli practices, among them the massive immigration and settlement of Jews in all occupied territories in violation of international law, in particular the Fourth Geneva Convention of 1949.

9. For the sixtieth session, the AALCO secretariat prepared notes and comments on similar items.⁸

10. Consultations were also arranged during the General Assembly sessions between the representatives of AALCO member States and other interested States or bodies to exchange views on matters of common interest. For instance, during the fifty-ninth session of the Assembly, AALCO convened a meeting of legal advisers from AALCO member States and a joint AALCO-International Law Commission meeting on 10 November 2004.⁹ Legal advisers participating in the work of that session attended the meeting, which was also attended by the Under-Secretary-General for Legal Affairs and Legal Counsel of the United Nations, the Chairman of the Sixth Committee, and the Chairman and members of the International Law Commission. At the legal advisers meeting, three topics were discussed, namely: (a) an effective international legal instrument against corruption; (b) World Trade Organization (WTO): some issues for consideration; and (c) Kyoto Protocol: problems and prospects. The focus of the joint AALCO-International Law Commission meeting was on three topics, namely: (a) international liability for injurious consequences arising out of acts not prohibited by international law; (b) shared natural resources (transboundary ground waters); and (c) diplomatic protection.

11. At the meeting of legal advisers from AALCO member States, held on 31 October 2005, discussions were focused on international terrorism and on expressions of folklore and its international protection. At the joint AALCO-International Law Commission meeting held on the same day, discussions were focused on reservations to treaties and on the effect of armed conflicts on treaties. In addition to the legal advisers from the AALCO member States, these meetings were attended by the Under-Secretary-General for Legal Affairs and Legal Counsel of the United Nations, and the Chairman and members of the International Law Commission.¹⁰

D. International economic cooperation and development

12. During the period under review, AALCO continued to monitor the progress made in the work of the United Nations Commission on International Trade Law (UNCITRAL). The AALCO secretariat prepared notes and comments on the work of

⁸ AALCO Notes and Comments/UNGA/60/2005

⁹ For details, see AALCO/LAM/VR/NY/2004

¹⁰ For details, see AALCO/LAM/VR/NY/2005

UNCITRAL at its thirty-seventh and thirty-eighth sessions. The organization commended UNCITRAL for its successful completion and adoption of the Model Legislative Provisions on Privately Financed Infrastructure Projects (2003), Model Legislative Guide on Insolvency Law (2004) and Convention on the Use of Electronic Communications in International Contracts (2005) and urged its member States to consider adopting, ratifying or acceding to other texts prepared by UNCITRAL.

13. The AALCO secretariat prepared progress reports covering the legislative activities of the United Nations and other international organizations, such as the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, the International Institute for the Unification of Private Law and the Hague Conference on Private International Law, involved in the development of international trade law and related matters for consideration at the forty-third (Bali, Indonesia, 2004), forty-fourth (Nairobi, 2005) and forty-fifth (New Delhi, 2006) sessions of the organization.

14. The organization continues to be actively engaged in monitoring the work and functioning of the WTO, which is a subject of importance to the region. At its forty-third and forty-fourth sessions, the AALCO secretariat reported on the developments in the negotiations under the Doha Development Round, with special emphasis on the July 2004 decisions of the WTO General Council, and on progress in the review process of the understanding on rules and procedures governing the settlement of disputes. At the forty-fifth session, the AALCO secretariat provided a comprehensive report on the sixth WTO Ministerial Conference (2005), held in Hong Kong, China, with special emphasis on agriculture negotiations, non-agriculture market access, trade-related intellectual property rights, public health, trade facilitation, development issues, General Agreement on Trade in Services and progress in the review process of the dispute settlement understanding.

E. Measures for promotion of the ratification and implementation of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea

15. The Asian-African Legal Consultative Organization continues to monitor closely the work and functioning of the International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea, the International Seabed Authority and other related organs. AALCO further urges its member States to accede to the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea.

16. At its forty-third, forty-fourth and forty-fifth sessions, AALCO took note of the deliberations at the United Nations Open-ended Informal Consultative Process on Oceans and the Law of the Sea, established by the General Assembly to facilitate the annual review of developments in ocean affairs. It welcomed the active role being played by the International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea in the peaceful settlement of disputes with regard to ocean-related matters. It urged the full and effective participation of member States in the work of the International Seabed Authority and other related bodies established by the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea to ensure and safeguard the legitimate interests of developing and less developed States.

F. Strengthening of cooperation with the specialized agencies and other international organizations

17. During the period under review, UNEP and AALCO renewed their framework for cooperation by entering into a new memorandum of understanding on 29 June 2005. The memorandum of understanding seeks to establish a renewed framework for collaboration between UNEP and AALCO in the area of promoting the development and implementation of international environmental law. It replaces the 1992 agreement between AALCO and UNEP.

18. Progress has been made in the negotiations to conclude cooperation agreements with the International Criminal Court. Negotiations are under way with the Economic Cooperation Organization (Tehran) and the International Tropical Timber Organization (Yokohama, Japan) to conclude cooperation agreements. Such cooperation agreements provide useful bases for strengthening working relationships with specialized agencies and other international organizations and bodies. Cooperation includes the organization of joint meetings and seminars on topics of mutual interest. The participation of resource persons and experts in AALCO meetings enriches the deliberations.

G. Question of refugees and statelessness

19. The Asian-African Legal Consultative Organization has been actively engaged in the study of refugee law and has been working in close cooperation with UNHCR for that purpose. The contributions made by AALCO on this topic are of immense importance to the Asian-African countries. A two-day seminar was convened in 2003 by AALCO in collaboration with UNHCR, on the theme "Strengthening refugee protection in migratory movements". The seminar dealt with such issues as migration and refugee protection in the Asian-African context, the challenges and legal responses affecting asylum procedures and the interplay of national security issues in the refugee context.

20. During the forty-fifth annual golden jubilee session of AALCO, a half-day special meeting on legal identity and statelessness was convened in collaboration with UNHCR. The meeting revolved around the following themes: root causes of the statelessness problem and the difficulties involved in identifying stateless persons; interplay between the refugee movements and the situation of statelessness; efficacy of the international legal regime on stateless persons; role of UNHCR in this regard; and specific situations of statelessness affecting the Asian-African region.

H. Environment and sustainable development

21. Legal issues concerning environment and development have been on the agenda of AALCO for over three decades. The organization actively participated in the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development held in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, in June 1992. Since the Conference, the work programme of AALCO in this field has focused primarily on matters concerning the general implementation of Agenda 21 and the particular implementation of the three conventions, namely, the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate

Change, the Convention on Biological Diversity, and the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification in those Countries Experiencing Drought and/or Desertification, Particularly in Africa. In view of the World Summit on Sustainable Development, held in Johannesburg, South Africa, in 2002, the work of the AALCO secretariat now also focuses on the Johannesburg Declaration on Sustainable Development and the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation.

22. The organization follows the progress achieved in the implementation of those three conventions by focusing on the work of the Conference of the Parties. At its forty-fourth session, a one-day special meeting on environmental law and sustainable development, jointly organized by UNEP, the Government of Kenya and AALCO, was convened. The Vice-President of Kenya inaugurated the meeting and delivered the inaugural address. Opening statements were made by the Minister of Environment and Natural Resources of Kenya, the Deputy Executive Director of UNEP and the Secretary-General of AALCO. Three substantive sessions were held at the meeting, including on: the Asian and African perspective on sustainable development, the role of law, human rights and environmental justice; compliance with and enforcement of environmental law; and entry into force of the Kyoto Protocol, problems and prospects. Panellists included experts from UNEP, the secretariat of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, present and former members of the International Law Commission, the Director-General of the National Environmental Agency of Kenya and a university professor.

23. The forty-fourth session of the conference of parties adopted the Nairobi Resolution on "Environmental law and sustainable development". In the resolution, AALCO invited member States to promote the legislative and other measures necessary to ensure implementation, compliance with and enforcement of national and international environmental law, and encouraged them to raise awareness and promote the capacity-building of the various legal stakeholders who handle environmental issues, such as the members of the judiciary, legal practitioners, investigators and prosecutors, forensic experts and custom officials. It also requested the Executive Director of UNEP and the Secretary-General of AALCO to provide advisory services, technical assistance and capacity-building, in the form of training of legal stakeholders from member States, in strengthening environmental laws and institutions for sustainable environmental management in accordance with the Bali Strategic Plan for technology support and capacity-building. It further requested the Secretary-General of AALCO in consultation with UNEP to develop a programme of work in the field of environmental law and sustainable development within the framework of the memorandum of understanding signed between the two organizations.

24. The organization also monitors the progress achieved in the implementation of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, the Convention on Biological Diversity, and the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification, in particular by focusing on the work of the conference of the parties. The mandate for this was renewed at the forty-third and forty-fifth sessions.

I. Extraterritorial application of national legislation: sanctions imposed against third parties.

25. The item "Extraterritorial application of national legislation: sanctions imposed against third parties" continues to be on the agenda of AALCO. During the period under review, the AALCO secretariat was asked to continue to study the legal issues relating to the item and also to examine the issue of executive orders imposing sanctions against target States. Furthermore, member States have been urged to provide relevant information and materials to the AALCO secretariat.

J. Deportation of Palestinians and other Israeli practices, among them the massive immigration and settlement of Jews in all occupied territories in violation of international law, particularly the Fourth Geneva Convention of 1949

26. The item "Deportation of Palestinians and other Israeli practices, among them the massive immigration and settlement of Jews in all occupied territories in violation of international law, particularly the Fourth Geneva Convention of 1949", has been on the agenda of AALCO since 1988. The resolutions passed at successive sessions call for the implementation of General Assembly and Security Council resolutions, as well as other agreements signed among various parties to ensure the establishment of just and lasting peace in the Middle East.

K. Establishing cooperation against trafficking in women and children

27. The Asian-African Legal Consultative Organization considered the item on establishing cooperation in combating trafficking in women and children for the first time at its fortieth session, held in New Delhi in 2001. The AALCO secretariat is currently drafting a model legislation against trafficking in persons especially women and children by studying the national legislations and other relevant information sent by its member States. As of 1 April 2006, the AALCO secretariat had received national legislation and comments from 22 member States.

28. The preliminary draft of the model legislation (preamble and a set of five draft articles, along with explanatory notes) was drafted and circulated to the member States at the forty-fifth headquarters session in New Delhi in April 2006. The significance of this model legislation lies in its attempt to correlate the global issue of trafficking in persons, especially women and children, with the issue of migration and refugee law. The model legislation has a two-fold approach, namely, a gender and human rights perspective, including issues of asylum and migration, and a criminal law perspective on preventing and combating trafficking in persons.

L. Legal protection of migrant workers

29. The item entitled "Legal protection of migrant workers" has been on the agenda of AALCO since its thirty-fifth session, held in Manila in 1996. An agreement for cooperation between AALCO and the International Organization for

Migration (IOM) was signed in October 2001. In 2002, the AALCO secretariat, in collaboration with IOM, prepared a draft model regional cooperation agreement between States of origin and States of destination/employment for the purposes of collaboration in matters relating to migrant workers.

30. During the forty-fifth annual session of AALCO, a half-day special meeting on international migration law was convened in collaboration with IOM. The meeting, in which various experts participated, focused on the root causes of migration flows, the principles of international migration law, the international legal regime governing migration, the impact of illegal migration on State sovereignty and the economic implications of the process of migration for developing countries.

M. International terrorism

31. The item on international terrorism was placed on the agenda of AALCO at its fortieth session. The organization continues to monitor and report on the progress of work of the ad hoc committee established pursuant to General Assembly resolution 51/210. Discussions at the AALCO sessions on the item focus on the contentious issues of the draft comprehensive convention on international terrorism. In 2006, the AALCO secretariat issued "A preliminary study on the concept of international terrorism" with the aim of helping member States of AALCO in their discussions on the subject at various international forums.

N. International Criminal Court: recent developments

32. The Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court, adopted on 17 July 1998, entered into force on 1 July 2002. With the entry into force of the Statute, AALCO reoriented its work programme focus, inter alia, on the work of the supreme decision-making body of the Rome Statute, the Assembly of States Parties, the establishment and functioning of the International Criminal Court and other developments related to the Court, such as the practice of the United States of America of entering into bilateral immunity agreements.

33. The importance of the universal acceptance of the Rome Statute was emphasized at the forty-third, forty-fourth and forty-fifth sessions of AALCO. In this regard, AALCO also encouraged its member States to consider ratifying/acceding to the Rome Statute and the Agreement on the Privileges and Immunities of the International Criminal Court.

O. An effective international legal instrument against corruption

34. The item "An effective international legal instrument against corruption" has been on the agenda of AALCO since its forty-first session. The item was included in the agenda of AALCO by the Secretary-General of the organization, taking into consideration resolution 55/61, in which the General Assembly decided to establish an ad hoc committee to commence negotiations for the conclusion of an effective legal instrument against corruption.

35. At the forty-third session, the AALCO secretariat provided a comprehensive overview of the United Nations Convention against Corruption, which was opened

for signature in December 2004. During the session, a resolution was adopted urging the member States to ratify and implement the Convention. At the forty-fourth session, the AALCO secretariat gave an overview of developments in the implementation of the Convention. During that session a special study, on the theme "Combating corruption: a legal analysis", prepared by the AALCO secretariat as part of the Centre for Research and Training, was submitted to the member States.

36. At the forty-fifth session, the AALCO secretariat provided a brief outline of the nature of obligations under the Convention and reported on the eleventh United Nations Congress on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice, held in April 2005. During the session, the AALCO secretariat issued a publication on rights and obligations under the United Nations Convention against Corruption, providing a detailed analysis of the obligations envisaged under the Convention.

P. Human rights in Islam

37. The item "Human rights in Islam" was included in the agenda of AALCO at its forty-first session (Abuja, 2002). Since then, the item has been deliberated upon during successive sessions. The AALCO secretariat report on the item at previous sessions focused on the analysis of human rights in Islam from the civil and criminal law perspective.

38. A meeting of international experts on human rights in Islam was convened in Kuala Lumpur from 15 to 19 May 2006. The meeting was organized by the Government of Malaysia in collaboration with AALCO and the Government of Saudi Arabia. The main theme of the meeting was "Understanding human rights as understood in Islam". The meeting was organized to serve as a platform for experts from various fields to examine Islamic principles on human rights, with the aim of dissuading misunderstanding of Islam and Muslims.

III. Other activities

A. Centre for Research and Training

39. Bearing in mind the growing importance of research and training, the AALCO member States, established the Centre for Research and Training in 1989. The Centre is engaged in:

- (a) Capacity-building by carrying out research projects on international law;
- (b) Organizing training programmes, in particular relating to international law, for officials of AALCO member States through short-term attachment to the AALCO secretariat;
- (c) Convening workshops and seminars and arranging discussions or lectures by international law experts from within and outside the AALCO region;
- (d) Updating and improving the technical efficiency of the website for facilitating communication between the AALCO secretariat, the member States, the United Nations, the specialized agencies of the United Nations system and other international organizations;

(c) Collecting and disseminating information and materials of interest to member States.

40. During the forty-fifth session of the organization, which marked its golden jubilee year, the member States established a research and training fund through resolution 45 ORG 4, to provide the Centre for Research and Training with a sound financial base and provide new impetus for the Centre's activities. The fund would provide support for the new headquarters building, which has modern equipment and meeting facilities. Any member State or Observer of AALCO can make a voluntary contribution to the fund. The fund is devoted to research on international law issues of common interest to member States and for the training of officials of member States.

41. During the period under review, a two-day conference on "Custom as a source of humanitarian law" was held on 8 and 9 December 2005 in New Delhi. The Conference was jointly organized by AALCO and the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) to mark the publication of the ICRC study *Customary International Humanitarian Law* (ICRC and Cambridge University Press, 2005). Discussions at the conference were organized under the following themes: "International Committee of the Red Cross study on customary international humanitarian law: an assessment", "Customary humanitarian law, its enforcement and the role of the International Criminal Court", and "Legal framework for the treatment of persons in armed conflict". Eminent experts gave presentations.

42. In accordance with its mandate to conduct in-depth research on topics of international law, the Centre has issued three studies, entitled, "Combating corruption: a legal analysis", "Rights and obligations under the United Nations Convention against Corruption" and "A preliminary study on the concept of international terrorism".

B. Publications

43. The annual report of the organization, *Yearbook of the Asian-African Legal Consultative Organization*, has been published by the AALCO secretariat since 2003. The *Yearbook* provides comprehensive information about AALCO, AALCO secretariat reports on the agenda items, a summary of deliberations and the resolutions adopted at the annual session. In addition, it contains statements delivered at various international conferences/seminars by the Secretary-General and the Deputy Secretaries General of AALCO.

44. An important initiative undertaken in 2005 was the re-launch of the AALCO *Quarterly Bulletin*. It is a reconfigured version of the earlier bulletin. The *Quarterly Bulletin* contains articles on international law and on selected current developments, and information on documents of relevance to the Asian-African States. The AALCO secretariat has also been issuing the "Newsletter of the Asian-African Legal Consultative Organization" since September 2004.

45. In the period under review, the organization issued three studies, namely: *Combating Corruption: A Legal Analysis*, *Rights and Obligations under the United Nations Convention against Corruption*, and *A Preliminary Study on the Concept of International Terrorism*.

IV. Efforts to promote international arbitration

46. In its efforts to promote international arbitration, AALCO established the Regional Centre for Arbitration in Kuala Lumpur in 1978 and the Regional Centre for Arbitration in Cairo in 1979. Agreements signed with the host Governments recognize the status of the Centres as intergovernmental organizations with certain immunities and privileges for their independent functioning. In 1980, an agreement was concluded with Nigeria for the location of a third centre in Lagos. That centre was formally inaugurated in March 1989.

47. The fourth Regional Centre for Arbitration is in Tehran, established with the support of the Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran. On 10 June 2004, the host Government ratified the agreement formally establishing the Centre and Moshkan Mashkour was appointed Director. On 31 January 2005, the Centre adopted the Tehran Rules of the Arbitration Centre, in line with the model rules of arbitration of the United Nations Commission on International Trade Law.

48. On 7 February 2006 the Secretary-General of AALCO inaugurated the advisory committee of the Regional Centre for Arbitration in Lagos. Also present on the occasion were A. G. Karibi-Whyte, Justice of the Supreme Court of Nigeria, Eunice Oddiri, Director of the Centre, and members of the advisory board and other dignitaries.

49. On 11 February 2006, the Regional Centre for Arbitration in Cairo and the League of Arab States organized a regional conference on the theme "The World Trade Organization at 10: the role of developing countries in negotiations and dispute settlement", with the cooperation of the World Trade Organization in Cairo. Expert speakers included Professors from various universities, members of the appellate body of WTO, experts from WTO, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, WIPO and the Egyptian ministry.

50. On 3 April 2006, during the forty-fifth session of AALCO, the Government of Kenya (represented by the Attorney-General) and the Secretary-General of AALCO signed a memorandum of understanding for establishing the fifth Regional Centre for Arbitration, in Nairobi, in accordance with the resolution adopted at the thirty-third session, held in Tokyo (1994), calling for the establishment of additional centres in Tehran and Nairobi.